

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

July 11, 2011

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Mike Troutman, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Dan Buscher Kurt Thornton
Heather Lane-Fowler Mike Troutman
Doug Sofia
Susan Baldwin (City Commission Liaison)

Members Absent: Glen Harris

Staff Present: Eileen Wicklund, City Attorney
Glenn Perian, Senior Planner
Leona Parrish, Admin. Assistant

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA: None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Mr. Kurt Thornton made note of (3) corrections to minutes: Page 1, bottom of page: change "THORNTON" to "THORNTON"; Page 3, 3rd paragraph: change "came" to "come"; and Page 5, 5th paragraph: change "sing" to "sign".

MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. HEATHER LANE-FOWLER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 14, 2010 MEETING WITH CORRECTIONS AS NOTED; SECONDED BY MR. DAN BUSCHER.

ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED MOTION; MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

(Note: Commission was asked to review by-law revisions provided at the March 14, 2011 meeting; Ms. Wicklund asked that any suggestions or changes be sent to her prior to review at next HDC meeting.)

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **23 Manchester Street:** Application submitted by Family Health Center, 181 W. Emmett Street, requesting to demolish structure located at 23 E. Manchester St. to create open green space for the expanding campus of the Family Health Center.

Mr. Scott Hutchings, 181 W. Emmett Street was present to speak on behalf of Family Health Center. Stated they are requesting permission to demolish the residential structure to create green space; noted

they had originally intended to purchase for renovation, but discovered the damage was too severe for repair.

Mr. Mike Troutman asked how long it had been since someone had lived in this home. Mr. Hutchings stated six-months ago and noted they purchased this property in May, 2011.

Ms. Heather Lane-Fowler asked if the cost was \$23,000 dollars for demolition. Mr. Hutchings stated yes that was correct.

Mr. Dan Buscher asked if they considered offering this property for sale. Mr. Hutchings stated they could have but a realtor said it would be difficult for anyone to get funding to purchase because of the repairs needed, which could be around \$50,000 dollars. (Mr. Hutchings provided three photos of the properties interior damage).

Mr. Troutman asked if they had originally purchased this property to rehab and use for residential use. Mr. Scott Hutchings stated yes, they also have another house they purchased on Hazel St. which is used for visiting physicians. Said the property owner's husband passed away and the wife moved to Kalamazoo to live with family.

Mr. Buscher asked if it had looked the same when they purchased as it does now in the photos. Mr. Hutchings stated yes, it had furniture in it when they looked at it to buy and now that it is empty it reveals much more damage than expected.

Mr. Sofia asked if they were going to purchase for physicians to live in. Mr. A.J. Jones, President and CEO of Family Health Center came forward to speak. Stated yes, they have been looking at purchasing several properties to purchase including the yellow house nearby with the gardens and also another house and barber shop. Said they have been working hard on trying to buy adjacent properties and would also like to purchase the daycare for their employees. Noted they are active in the Neighborhood Planning Council #2 and are trying to help clean-up the neighborhood.

Mr. Buscher asked if they had spoken to the NPC about the property in question for demolition. Mr. Jones stated yes and also the families in the neighborhood are aware of what they want to do in the neighborhood.

Ms. Eileen Wicklund, City Attorney, stated the commission should discuss amongst themselves and referenced Chapter 1470.09(e) 1, 2, 3, & 4 (read this section) noting the conditions and stating they should discuss for the record if conditions have been met.

Mr. Thornton stated regarding financial burden; they do not have an estimated cost of the repairs; asked if the commission wanted to postpone until they have a valid estimate of the repair cost.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KURT THORNTON TO POSTPONE UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING TO ALLOW PETITIONER TO PROVIDE A COMPLETE COST ESTIMATE OF THE REPAIRS; SECONDED BY MR. DOUG SOFIA.

Ms. Heather Lane-Fowler asked if this could be a city rehab candidate. Mr. Jones stated they have not spoken to the city and could guarantee it will be over \$50,000 dollars to repair, but would be glad to come back with repair bids. Stated it would sit and deteriorate further and need to be demolished later.

Mayor Baldwin stated the petitioner provided information showing it would not be reasonable to rehab and is a detriment to major improvement, also a neighborhood hazard and is past its usefulness; suggest they give it some thought.

Ms. Lane-Fowler stated she agrees that it supports item #1 in 1470.09 (e).

Mr. Buscher noted that the statue states they only need to meet one of the criteria for approval and this meets two of them.

Mr. Thornton read item noted on the application under instructions: *“Proposed demolition should include estimates for the complete repair of the property.”* Stated that it will probably pass next month, but feels they need to submit a repair estimate.

FOUR IN FAVOR (LANE-FOWLER, SOFIA, THORNTON AND TROUTMAN); ONE OPPOSED (BUSCHER); MOTION PASSED TO POSTPONE.

- b. **32 E. Michigan Avenue:** Application submitted by Northern Sign Company requesting placement of new identification signs for new “Allstate” office in the front and rear of 32 E. Michigan Avenue.

Mr. Lorin Granger, 32 E. Michigan Avenue property owner, was present to speak. Provided new photo of front sign with logo and asked for approval with new design submitted.

Mr. Dan Buscher asked if the new design meets city approval and guidelines. Mr. Perian stated, yes it meets the city guidelines.

Mr. Buscher asked if the rear sign would be changed also. Mr. Granger stated there would be no changes to the rear sign; it would be as originally submitted.

Mr. Doug Sofia asked if the door was the same door. Mr. Granger stated the door has been replaced with a plain white door.

Mr. Thornton asked how long they have been open for business in the downtown. Mr. Granger stated since June 1, 2011.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KURT THORNTON TO APPROVE THE FRONT SIGN THAT INCLUDES THE ALLSTATE LOGO WITH 18” CHANNEL LETTERS SUBMITTED TODAY AND THE REAR DOOR SIGN AS ORIGINALLY SUBMITTED AS IT MEETS THE SECRETARY OF INTERIORS STANDARDS AS OUTLINED IN THE STAFF REPORT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 32 E. MICHIGAN AVENUE; SECONDED BY MS. HEATHER LANE-FOWLER.

ALL IN FAVOR; NONE OPPOSED; MOTION PASSED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF:

Ms. Heather Lane Fowler asked if the Historic District Commission had authority over properties that were not within a Historic District; such as a property on Elizabeth Street who was replacing their roof from damage received from recent storm with regular roofing instead of original red tile. Mr. Perian stated the commission does not have authority over properties that are not within a local historic district.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Mike Troutman, Chairperson adjourned meeting at 4:34 p.m.

Submitted by: Leona A. Parrish, Administrative Assistant, Planning Department